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What is claimed is:

1. A zoom lens, comprising in a direction of light propagation:
  - 5 a front lens group having positive refractive power, a variator lens group having negative refractive power, a compensator lens group having positive refractive power,
  - a base lens group having positive refractive power,
  - 10 wherein said base lens group comprising a first base lens group and a second base lens group, wherein said front lens group, said variator lens group, said compensator lens group and said first base lens group are arranged along a common straight first
  - 15 optical axis, wherein said second base lens group is arranged along a second optical axis inclined with respect to said first optical axis at a first angle  $\alpha$  different from 0 and 180°, and
  - 20 wherein a beam deflector is arranged between said first base lens group and said second base lens group.
2. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, wherein said variator lens group and said compensator lens group are
- 25 arranged moveably along said first optical axis for zooming.
3. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a diaphragm arranged in the direction of light
- 30 propagation in front of said first base lens group.
4. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 3, wherein said diaphragm is arranged at a distance from said first base lens group and wherein said distance is fixed during zooming.
- 35 5. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 4, wherein said

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base lens group having a front focal plane and a back focal plane and wherein said diaphragm is arranged in the neighbourhood of said front focal plane.

5 6. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 2, wherein said second base lens group is arranged moveably along said second optical axis for focusing.

7. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, wherein said  
10 first base lens group has a positive refractive power and wherein said second base lens group has a positive refractive power.

8. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, wherein said  
15 first angle  $\alpha$  is in the range between  $50^\circ$  and  $130^\circ$ .

9. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, wherein said beam deflector is a plane mirror with a mirror surface having a normal to the mirror surface wherein said nor-  
20 mal to the mirror surface being inclined to said first optical axis at a second angle which is a half of said first angle.

10. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, wherein said  
25 beam deflector is a deflecting prism.

11. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 5, wherein said first base lens group and said second base lens group are arranged at a distance along said first and second  
30 optical axis, which distance is at least 15% of the overall length of said zoom lens measured from a vertex of said front lens group to said back focal plane of said base lens group.

35 12. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an optical spectral filter.

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13. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 12, wherein said optical spectral filter is arranged between said second base lens group and said back focal plane of said base lens group.

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14. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 13, wherein said optical spectral filter is arranged rotatably around said second optical axis.

10 15. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, said zoom lens providing a zoom factor of 8.

16. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, said zoom lens having an aperture number of at least 3.2.

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17. The zoom lens as claimed in claim 1, said zoom lens having a variable focal range from 34 mm to 272 mm.

20 18. A Military reconnaissance system comprising:  
a zoom lens,  
a detector in a detector plane of said zoom lens,  
said zoom lens comprising:  
a front lens group having positive refractive power,  
25 a variator lens group having negative refractive power,  
a compensator lens group having positive refractive power,  
a base lens group having positive refractive power,  
wherein said base lens group comprising a first base  
30 lens group and a second base lens group,  
wherein said front lens group, said variator lens group, said compensator lens group and said first base lens group are arranged along a common straight first optical axis,  
35 wherein said second base lens group is arranged along a second optical axis inclined with respect to said first optical axis at a first angle  $\alpha$  different from  $0^\circ$  and

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180°, and

wherein a beam deflector is arranged between said first base lens group and said second base lens group.

5 19. The Military reconnaissance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein said first angle  $\alpha$  is in the range between 50° and 130°.

10 20. The Military reconnaissance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein said variator lens group and said compensator lens group are arranged moveably along said first optical axis for zooming.

15 21. The Military reconnaissance system as claimed in claim 20, wherein said second base lens group is arranged moveably along said second optical axis for focusing.

20 22. The Military reconnaissance system as claimed in claim 20, wherein said variator lens group and said compensator lens group are moveably independently of a movement of said second base lens group.

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